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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U. S. Department of Agriculture

A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

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SPACE.....GSA recently informed the Department that the remaining space at Buzzard Point has been assigned to another agency and is no longer available to USDA. Jim Steele, GSA Regional Commissioner, Public Buildings Service, stated at a recent meeting that he knows of no other space that will be available for assignment in the short run. In addition, he expects that housing the new Department of Energy will be his top priority and will command all of his available resources for at least the next year. He also stated that GSA expects to keep partial occupancy of the Auditors Complex during the renovations which are to begin in FY 1978.

The Department is now looking for additional space in our existing inventory. Inspired by FmHA's success in relocating a contractor into commercial space, and making space available for USDA employees, we conducted a survey of all space in the Complex assigned to contractors and task forces. To date, the result of the survey is disappointing and it appears we will not be able to recapture much more than the 3,000 square feet in the Auditors Building that was recaptured by FmHA.

At the present time the Office of Operations is working with several agencies regarding the possibility of moving some small units from the Complex. This is the only meaningful course of action we have in the near term. OO is working with GSA on a long term solution to the problem. Reorganizations now in progress have had a substantial impact on our long term requirements and reassessment of our long term situation will be required. (Contact: Al Cauley, OO, ext. 72815)

XEROX 9200 EQUIPMENT.....Two Xerox 9200 duplicating systems were installed at Station 3 in late May. The June results are impressive:

- The number of personnel required has been reduced from five to three;
- The number of impressions has increased from a monthly average of 460,000 to 800,000
- The cost per copy has been reduced from 1.4 to 0.9 cents (This includes only the labor from the previous system and the labor and machine rental for the Xerox system. Additional savings in equipment maintenance and better use of paper are not included).

(Contact: Al Cauley, OO, ext. 72815)

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CONFERENCE.....OO and agency Directors of Administrative Services are planning a 3-day conference tentatively set for October 5-7. Subject matter will include property management information, property accountability and control, and other FY 1977-78 objectives. (Contact: George Knapp, OO, ext. 73937)

FLEXITIME IN ARS.....ARS is now introducing flexitime in 10 field locations. Prior to introduction, employees were asked to indicate their attitude toward flexitime. The following data is based on 732 responses:

| <u>Changes Anticipated</u> | <u>% Positive</u> | <u>% Negative</u> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Traffic congestion | 75.5 | 5.9 |
| Other nonwork activities | 69.5 | 1.4 |
| Tardiness | 56.9 | 12.3 |
| Coordinating family schedules | 55.6 | 4.4 |
| Absenteeism | 48.0 | 9.7 |
| Scheduling work projects | 40.0 | 9.5 |
| Cooperation within work unit | 31.8 | 7.6 |
| Meeting deadlines | 25.0 | 7.9 |
| Turnover | 23.7 | 7.3 |
| Assigning work to individuals | 22.7 | 10.4 |
| Child care arrangements | 20.5 | 1.8 |

The overall reaction toward flexitime was as follows:

| | <u>Percent</u> |
|------------------|----------------|
| Strongly favor | 45.0 |
| Favor | 31.3 |
| Neutral | 15.5 |
| Opposed | 5.5 |
| Strongly opposed | 2.7 |

An assessment of attitudes and productivity will be made at the end of a six month period. (Contact: Ray Rhodes: ARS, ext. 73803)

AUTOMOBILE RENTAL.....When travel by automobile is authorized, Agency travelers should be advised that they are required to utilize GSA Inter-agency Motor Pool vehicles as a first choice whenever reasonably available. If it is determined that a commercially rented vehicle would be more advantageous to the Government then first consideration shall be given to Government-contract rental vehicles available under a GSA Federal Supply Schedule contract. A Federal Supply Schedule and traveler's Pocket Guide (publication 00 SC 7501), is available from GSA by calling FTS 8-234-4195. (Contact: Howard Globerman, OF, ext. 77251 concerning travel regulations and the Office of Operations on questions relating to the Federal Supply Schedule Contract.)

FY 1979 AGENCY ESTIMATES.....FY 1979 estimates have been submitted by the agencies and OBPE is now reviewing and analyzing the data and preparing summaries for use by Departmental policy officials at the Secretary's hearings. The hearings to be held in room 218-A will take place from July 28 through August 19. The schedule and a list of five points to be covered in the hearings have been distributed to agency officials. (Contact: Bob Sherman, OBPE, ext. 76176)

FY 1978 APPROPRIATIONS.....The Conferees have not yet met to make their recommendations and report to the Congress on the Agriculture and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. The House bill provides for \$12,366 billion budget authority for USDA. The Senate bill provides for \$12,256 billion. The budget estimate was \$12,625 billion. (Contact: Bob Sherman, OBPE, ext. 76176)

NEW APPOINTMENTS.....

...OGC - President Carter has nominated Ms. Sarah C. Weddington of Austin, Texas, as General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Nomination is subject to U.S. Senate confirmation. Ms. Weddington has been a member of the Texas House of Representatives since 1973. In 1971 Ms. Weddington opened her own law office for the general practice of law and since 1975 has been certified as a family law specialist by the Texas Bar Association.

...ASCS - Mr. Ray Fitzgerald has been named Administrator of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. Prior to assuming this position, he was President of the Agricultural Cooperative Development International in Washington, D.C. Mr. Fitzgerald served with ASCS from 1962 to 1969 as Deputy Administrator for State and County operations and as vice president of the Commodity Credit Corporation, and in 1961-62 as Assistant Deputy Administrator.

...FSQS - Dr. Robert Angelotti has been selected by the Secretary to serve as Administrator of the Food Safety and Quality Service. Since 1971 Dr. Angelotti has been Associate Director for Compliance in FDA's Bureau of Foods. In recent months, he also has been serving as a Special Assistant to the Bureau Director, concentrating on programs and organization.

...RDS - Dr. William J. Nagle, an Iowa native with extensive experience in community development in this country and abroad, has been appointed Administrator of the Department's Rural Development Service. Dr. Nagle most recently was Director of Economic Development for the State of Maryland and earlier, as President of his own consulting firm, Community Resources, Inc., he worked in the areas of policy management, development planning, housing and international development. (Contact: Joe Logan, OP, ext. 77131)

PERSONNEL OFFICE PRODUCTIVITY MEASUREMENT.....As part of a nationwide pilot test covering over 30 offices of 12 Departments and Agencies, ARS and EMSC are participating in a one-year trial of a system to measure the productivity of personnel offices. This system was developed by the Civil Service Commission working with an interdepartmental group of personnel specialists. The outputs utilized in this system are now being reported on an annual basis by personnel offices to the CSC and require no additional tabulation for this test. Examples of measured outputs include the number of accessions, positions classified, formal grievances, EEO complaints, etc. The system inputs, covering all time spent in carrying out these activities, are collected through a random sample covering five two-week periods during the year. At the conclusion of the pilot test, the Bureau of Labor Statistics will compute the productivity data base utilizing inputs and outputs provided. If this system proves feasible, this sampling technique may be applied in other personnel offices and administrative support activities. (Contact: Ken Hatch, OBPE, ext. 75301)

PHOTOCOMPOSITION.....The Government Printing Office (GPO) no longer endorses in-house USDA photocomposition. This fall, GPO will offer rapid turnaround phototypesetting service as needed, using "driver tapes" prepared by USDA for use on GPO Video Comp 500 phototypesetters. ARS and ERS will be able to generate these driver tapes on their present Astro Comp text editing equipment. Other agencies will need to do one of the following:

- Send their photocomposition work to GPO for text editing and preparation for phototypesetting.
- Lease or purchase their own text editing equipment.
- Request ARS or ERS to provide the service on a reimbursable basis (as time and capacity are available).
- Use a central USDA text editing service if available.

OO is considering conversion of its present photocomposition system to a high speed, versatile, text editing system which can process manuscript copy, OCR scannable copy, or magnetic tape input. Centrally-located or remote CRT devices would offer rapid and flexible text editing by agencies and individual authors. When the text is approved, OO staff would encode phototypesetting instructions and prepare driver tapes for GPO.

Initial investment for the OO service would be about \$250,000. Decision to proceed will hinge on several factors, including best estimates of demand for the central service (initial estimates from agencies appear to be conservative, when compared to the total amount of material printed by USDA annually).

ARS and ERS experience with automatic text editing and photocomposition has resulted in major savings in clerical (typing), printing (through text compression), and mailing costs. Similar savings should be available to other agencies.

A decision concerning the central service unit is expected before mid-August, following additional discussions with user agencies. (Contact: George Knapp, OO, ext. 73937)

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DELIVERY.....The Reorganization Project staff at OMB is working on a comprehensive review of the management of administrative services with the Federal Government. The project will be administered jointly by OMB and the Administrator of the GSA.

A major objective of the study is to improve the delivery of administrative services to Federal agencies. It will assess the roles of the GSA and others in the provision of services related to real and personal property, ADP, telecommunications, and records management.

The Project will rely heavily on the advice and counsel of the Congress, Federal Departments and Agencies, State and local officials, interested private organizations, and the public. Federal agencies may be asked to contribute time, resources, and staff assistance to this effort. (Source: Memorandum to Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies, June 29, 1977)